TRANSCRIPT

COVID-19 Recovery and the Strategic Use of Funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

MARIE MANCUSO

So, good morning or afternoon everyone. I'm Marie Mancuso, the Director of the Region 13 Comprehensive Center. And I welcome you to this session on selecting evidence-based practices and measuring their effectiveness, one of a Comprehensive Center series on the strategic planning and use of COVID relief funds. On the next slide, you'll see a map of the national Center network. This session is a collaborative effort of the Comprehensive Center Regions, 2, 3, 13 and 15, who are part of this national network of federally funded technical assistance centers; and the Regional Educational Labs who serve the states in these regions, REL West, REL Southwest and REL Northeast and the Islands. I'm going to quickly turn this over to Julie Duffield, who will be managing the tech, along with Delphean Quan.

JULIE DUFFIELD

Thank you, Marie. Just to let you know, we have you all in mute as we do the main session, but please type into the chat, your questions and reflections at any time. And if you need any technical help, please click on my name J Duffy in the chat, and I can also help you. Thank you.

MARIE MANCUSO

So, the agenda format looks like this. We're going to begin with a whole group presentation on evidence-based practices, approach, selection, and use. Then we'll move to breakout rooms, state team time, where you have the opportunity to discuss what you just heard and apply it to your own context. We'll move back to the general session for a state share out so that you can share and hear what other state teams discussed during their breakout. We'll take a 10-minute break and then the format repeats itself.

We'll start with a presentation on measuring the effectiveness of evidence-based practices, then move to a breakout session. This time it'll be cross-state groups, so that states have the chance to talk to each other in a peer-to-peer discussion. We'll move back to the general session for a final share out from the cross-state discussions and some closing comments from both REL and the CC. On behalf of the Comprehensive Centers, Regions 2, 13, 15, and 3, I want to thank our REL colleagues for leading today's session, both the presentations and the breakouts. So, before we begin, I'd like to introduce Augustus Mays, who many of you know, he's WestEd's director of government relations, and he'll be setting the context for today's session. Augustus.

AUGUSTUS MAYS

Yes. Thank you, Marie. Next slide. Thank you. And good afternoon and good morning to everyone. And as Marie said, I think we want it to take the time today, before we dive into the session and dive into the content and the great substantive conversations you all will have today, we wanted to take the time to reflect where we've been, celebrate what we've accomplished during that period, and then have a discussion about where we're headed. And so over the past 12 to 14 months, right, we've all experienced in real time, the impact the pandemic has had on teaching and learning. Trauma and isolation for many of our children occurred during this period, obviously in some areas across the country, huge amounts of loss in terms of instructional time, or lack of engagement or attendance in school for many of our families and students across the country.

And as well as we saw in some instances, right, greater exasperation of the opportunity in achievement gap across all the grade levels. And so, given that obviously in our partnership with you all, on your SEA leadership teams, Region 2, 13 and 15 TCs, and the broader CC Network, has partnered with you all in helping and thinking through strategies to support student learning and well-being through the various relief packages, the three relief packages that Congress and the administration passed and funded over this past year.

And when we met last time on May 14th to discuss how to leverage the intended uses and considerations related to the American Rescue Plan, of course, we focused on some key themes in helping you prep for the 34 states of you that submitted your spending plan to the US Department of Ed on June 7th, about how to leverage the flexibility on how the funds are used, recognizing the time that you do have over the next three years to sort of leverage all three packages and the uses of these funds to address not only the safe reopening of schools, but as well as accelerating learning and identifying strategies and supports to do that.

And so, we sort of move forward to today as Marie sort of set up and framed for you all, that our REL partners and the REL network is going to really lean in today in having a conversation with you all about, of course, what the focus of the American Rescue Plan has been, a focus on evidence-based practices and its use. And supporting you all in identifying and understanding what the law says about the evidence-based requirements, but more importantly, helping you select and identify those practices and implementing them with effectiveness, as well as helping you all create the mechanisms and structures and tools to measure the impact that the interventions and strategies that you do select will have on teaching and learning throughout your systems.

So, I think that's very important today in terms of the journey we're about to embark with you today. Because it's really a focus on building SEA capacity, but more importantly too, building district and school capacity to do this kind of work. So, I look forward to today's conversation. I know the presentations and the content that our team has set up for you today is going to be very substantive and very engaging, and I hope you get a lot out of it. And so, I think I'm going to hand it over to my colleague, Lenay Dunn, who will kick us off on the first presentation.

LENAY DUNN

Thank you, Augustus and thank you, Marie, and to the Region 2, 3, 15 and 13 CCs for having us here today, we're really excited to share this content with you and thank you all for being here today. I'm Lenay Dunn and the Deputy Director of the Regional Educational Laboratory West, REL West at WestEd. And I'm joined in this presentation by my colleagues, John Rice, who's the director and Tran Keys, who is a senior research associate with us. So, we'll be taking you through some considerations about selecting and measuring the effectiveness of evidence-based practices. There are a lot of interactive components throughout, and we do encourage you to use the chat as well.

To next. Thank you. So, there are 10 RELs that are across the country. So, you have three of the RELs here with you today. So, REL West, which is in the red over there, and REL Southwest, which is the orange states, and then the purple up in the top corner, REL Northeast and Islands. So, we're happy to be here. Really what we do as RELs, we partner with districts and states and other stakeholders to bridge that gap between research and practice. And we do a lot of work on evidence use, which is why we're partnering here in the session today.

We have several goals for today. And really the fundamental piece of what we're trying to help you consider is how are you going to support LEAs in using their ARP funds for evidence-based interventions that fit their context, that are going to be effective and successful in their setting, give you some opportunities to develop some guidance, some expectations, and really deepen your own understanding of how you might support them in that process and also help them measure that.

One of the pieces that we really want to ground all this work in is how evidence-based practices are part of a continuous improvement framework. That's what really brings all the pieces together, as we think about how do you use evidence-based practice? So, on the next slide, we have a cycle that we're going to follow through, through this whole session. Some of you might be familiar with the cycle. This is from an evidence-based improvement guide that we developed back in 2017 when ESSA evidence provisions came out. 'It's really related to the non-regulatory guidance from the ESSA evidence provisions, the five-step process for evidence-based decision-making.

So, we''re going to take you through this process, but I want to first just describe what these steps are. The idea is you're not just making a one-time decision about using evidence and that's it, you're needing evidence throughout the process. You're starting by grounding in needs. So, that's the informed step. You're thinking about what the needs are, what your focus is. And then in the next step, you're selecting an evidence-based strategy, which for the purpose of this call and this information we're going to call it just interventions. So, 'you're selecting an intervention that will meet those needs and address those needs. Then you're planning for implementation, you''re thinking about what needs to be in place to make this affective in our setting. Then as you move into implementation, you're using those formative adjustments along the way to really think about how is this working in your context? What might you need to do to assess that in a formative way to improve implementation? And then the final step of analyzing is really a summative opportunity to step back and say, how well is this working in our context, looking at the performance, at other assessments, and then being able to start the cycle back over again. So, we're going to walk you through this cycle today and give you an opportunity to think about where your supports to LEAs are all along the way. So, the next slide, thank you.

So, we have a poll we're going to do in just a minute, but we want to set up a framework for you. This framework is really to provide you with a lens, to look at all of this information and really consider your role today. Some of you have seen this. I know some of you here in this session have worked with us before on this in terms of ESSA evidence provisions, but this is an approach to how are you supporting LEAs and using evidence for the ARP funds. This is a continuum with kind of four points in the continuum, starting on the left, Reviewer. So, once you get LEA plans for how they're going to use their funds, if you're a Reviewer, you're going to review them and provide some feedback as needed. If you're a Guider, you're going to provide some upfront guidance to LEAs and then review those plans and provide feedback as needed related to that guidance. Moving into more hands-on work on the continuum would be a Vetter, where you're guiding the development of those plans up front by using a set of criteria. So, you're really setting out some clear criteria and expectations for LEAs, and then you're assessing their plans against that criteria. And then to the farthest right of the approach is Definer. And this is where you would have perhaps like a list of approved interventions or vetted interventions that you've already worked from, that LEAs could choose from. These aren't necessarily mutually exclusive, it might fall somewhere in between these, but this is a frame to help you think about the kinds of supports that you'll provide to LEAs and where you might fit on this continuum. So, just looking at this, we want you to take a minute in a poll and say, what is or will be your SEA's or your SEA department's approach to supporting LEAs with evidence use for the ARP funds, keeping in mind [it] could vary across the SEA, but where do you see your SEA or your SEA's department?

Okay, it's looking like it's heading to where I was predicting it would be. I think it's okay to go ahead and close that up, Delphean. So, we have 58 percent said a Guider, which is where I predicted you all might be. We had 31 percent is Reviewers. 12 percent is Vetters and no Definers. So, that's a helpful lens. As you work through this information, thinking about if you're going to be a Guider, what are the kinds of guidance that you want to provide to LEAs along the way. If you're going to be a Vetter, what are the criteria? So, this is a lens that will help you as we move forward through today.

As you consider these pieces and this is when you get into your small groups, you could dig into this topic much more deeply than we have the opportunity to do as a whole group. But these are some considerations as you think about where you might fall on that continuum or where you might want to move to in that continuum, what is internal capacity? So, what are the skills of the SEA staff related to assessing evidence and assessing these plans, what kind of effort can SEA staff devote to this? So, how much time and effort given other roles and responsibilities, can you provide to assisting LEAs with selecting evidence-based interventions, and assessing the research and evidence for particularly relevant interventions? What kind of effort could you devote to that? And then the guidance, just what is sort of your approach as an SEA or your department within the SEA for the guidance that you might provide around evidence use, and could that differ based on things like LEA or school performance? So, those are some internal capacity considerations.

There are also on the next slide, some process considerations. These are definitions because I anticipate you probably, you've got many of these questions around ESSA evidence provisions and use, and you might anticipate some questions around the use of evidence for ARP funds. So, what is considered an intervention? What will satisfy your definition of that? Is it based on one study or multiple studies, really making those considerations? And then also once you get these LEA plans, what are you expecting the submissions to have to demonstrate the evidence base? Is it research studies? Is it a summary of that research? If it's an emerging or innovative intervention, what are you looking for to see that it has a strong theory of action? So, these are just considerations.

And then the final set of considerations are around structures and supports. So, structures and supports on the next slide are things like communication. So, what kinds of communication structures are in place between SEA and LEA staff that can be strengthened and used in these processes? And also what kinds of continuous improvement supports do you already have in place to LEAs that you could leverage and use all along the way to support them in this? So, if this is something you want to, as a small group in your state, dig into a little bit more, that is one of the breakout topics that you can, but this will help ground the work that you're doing with LEAs in the kind of approach that you might take.

So, we're going to shift gears now to jump really into how do we think about selecting and using evidence-based practices and specifically around accelerating learning, and socioemotional learning as well.

On the next slide, we show you the framework where we're digging in again, and we're going to start with the Inform and Select steps. So, grounding in needs, and then selecting evidence-based strategies that meet those needs.

So, we really want to emphasize that we start with the needs. We don't start with the answer, or the intervention, we start with, what are we trying to improve? And a question to really get into those needs is, what are the most pressing problems or issues to address? So, our CC colleagues helped us by diving into some of the submitted plans in Regions 2, 13 and 15, and there were some common needs that emerged. So, student mental health and socioemotional needs; students who have unenrolled or missing and related issues around chronic absence and disengagement; and learning acceleration, which as Augustus spoke to, to address longstanding achievement, achievement gaps that have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

So, those were three of the main needs that stuck out. So, as you think about supporting LEAs in identifying evidence-based strategies, how do they relate back to those needs? How do they address those needs? And questions to consider is where can those efforts have the most impact? If you have this opportunity of this funding, where can you concentrate that funding to have the most impact and really starting with, what do you hope to achieve? And then, what interventions will help achieve those outcomes?

So, that's how we really think about grounding and needs. Then we have to think about how do we address those needs? And we wanted to just pause and think about the current context. The way that we've been doing things before will not address those disproportionate effects on vulnerable populations. This is really an opportunity to rethink the structures, the policies, the processes that are in place and consider what has been working, what hasn't been working and really make the changes that need to happen to attain those outcomes.

The other thing to really consider is that it will be a community wide effort to accelerate learning and addressing these socioemotional wellbeing issues. So, how can you encourage LEAs to draw in community members, family, other kinds of supports, and how can you in the way that you're supporting LEAs and thinking through these issues, draw on those. So, if we are addressing needs from this community-wide perspective and acknowledging that the way we used to do things is not going to fit the current context, that will really help us as we move into addressing evidence-based practices.

I'm going to just talk very briefly about the ARP emphasis on evidence-based practices, because I know you've had an opportunity to really dig into that with Augustus and others around this. But the point to take away is, there are some specific evidence-based practices that have been called out as places to concentrate efforts and really addressing the disproportionate impact on underrepresented student groups and thinking about those groups, and what are the supports that are needed? It is an opportunity to really think about building capacity and addressing some of these longstanding issues through specific strategies, approaches, and potentially programs.

I'm also going to briefly on the next slide, talk about the four ESSA evidence levels. I know you're very familiar with these, but I wanted to make sure we had these as we move into the real content of the session. As you know, there are four levels and they really vary in terms of their strength of the research design. So, the strongest is an experimental study, randomized control trial. Quasi-experimental is sort of the next level down with moderate. A correlational study is promising and a positive evaluation, is demonstrates a rationale. And this tier four is really where innovation and the development of new interventions are coming from. What's important to note is the top tiers. There is a statistically significant results on the relevant outcomes that you're looking for. That's a really important piece of it. And then tier four is really thinking about the likeliness to improve the relevant outcomes. So, the more confidence that you can have that the intervention itself will lead to the outcomes that you're hoping for, the stronger the design, the more confidence you can have.

So, we're going to have a minute here to rest and think about in the chat, what information are LEAs using to select evidence-based practices related to ARP needs and priorities, and what questions are emerging from LEAs? We'd just like to know where are LEAs is in this process. What are they coming to you with questions and what kind of information are they using right now, as they're trying to select evidence-based strategies?

If you're not getting questions that would be good to know as well. Freddy, which strategies have a highest effect size of most bang for the buck, if you will? Okay, good. That's a good question. We're going to talk in just a few minutes about effect size and it's a difference from statistical significance and how that's a consideration. Great. Other questions that LEAs have asked you or information they're using?

Okay. Well, if those come as we continue on, we'd be happy to address some of those. I think we will really have a chance to reflect on this and think more. And if you haven't gotten questions yet, hopefully this session will help you think through some of the questions that you might get or answers that you might have to those. I'm going to pass it over to my colleague, John, who's going to help dig into some of the issues about how we support LEAs in selecting evidence-based practices and considerations for doing so.

JOHN RICE

All right. Thank you. Good morning, good afternoon, everyone. I'm John Rice, just to remind you, I'm director of REL West, and for the next few minutes, I'll be taking over here and I'll be talking a little bit about kind of some tips and things to consider when supporting LEAs and selecting evidence-based practices. So, we're going to start off with a little scenario and in this case, this is totally hypothetical. But we're going to talk about an LEA that you're working with in your state, that's looking for a K through 12 intervention for character development and socioemotional learning. And the idea here is that this LEA one of its things that's working on, and one of its goals is to improve school climate and graduation rates across its district. And as you probably know, there's a number of programs out there that try to address this.

But let's say in your case, your LEA has come to you and said, okay, we found this program called Connect with Kids as a possible evidence-based intervention. Some of you might be familiar with this program. We're not necessarily endorsing it, we're just using it as a hypothetical in this case. So, this LEA has come to you with Connect with Kids, and they're a suburban district K through 12 with about 20,000 students. And so, we're going to use this example of Connect with Kids. We're going to talk a little bit about it, and we're going to use it as a through line, as we talk about some of the considerations that districts should think about and that you can help districts think about when they're trying to select an evidence-based program. And in this case, particularly using their recovery and relief funds.

So, if you could go to the next slide, thank you. That's perfect. So, when we're talking about supporting LEAs and selecting evidence-based programs, we usually focus on like the top four things to consider when they're examining research. And also, as we know right now with all this funding coming down from the federal government, there's a lot of developers, curriculum providers kind of knocking on the door, trying to convince LEAs to adopt and buy these programs. So, these are some really good things for LEAs to consider when they're looking at research or when they're in conversations with these developers. And these four things I'm going to go over are by no means the only things to consider, but they are kind of the main things.

And one of them is the source of the research study. Okay. So, when someone's looking at research on evidence-based programs, who did the study? How was the study designed, is another consideration; of course, the findings of the study, which that's pretty obvious and that's pretty important. And then finally the relevance of the study to the specific context of the LEA that you're working with. So, I'll go over each of these four. I'm not going to go in great detail on any of them due to time limitations, but we do have a number of other resources in REL West and across the REL program that you can tap into, we'll be providing you links and ways to get to those resources.

Let's see, the next slide please. So, in this case, we want to talk about study source and there are some kind of rules of thumb to remember when you're considering the source of the study. One is that, is really the thing about the extent to which the source of the study is independent from the developer of the program or the intervention or the curriculum, because generally the more independent the researchers and the study authors are from the developer, the more confident we can be that the findings or what's being reported in the study are more objective.

And in particular, as you know, when the study is peer reviewed, from a peer reviewed research journal, that's even more confidence we can have in its objectivity. Now, if the only research on a program was conducted by the developer…so sometimes there's just not a lot to go on in terms of research. It doesn't by any means mean that the LEA should ignore the research or just throw it out, but it should raise their kind of skeptical antennae if you will, and think about, okay, the developer did this study, so I'm going to look really critically at it's other components.

Next slide, please. So, here are some examples of credible sources of research studies, as well as some aggregators of research. And I'm sure you're familiar with some of these. So, for example, The What Works Clearinghouse aggregates research, it's limited in that it's mostly academic focused and it' has a long history of not being user-friendly. But if you haven't looked at the What Works Clearinghouse recently, I suggest you do, it's been revamped. They've tried to make the site more user-friendly and they've connected the information on that website with the ESSA evidence levels. So, it's easier to see where specific interventions land on that four-tier continuum that Lenay was talking about a minute ago. Evidence for ESSA out of Johns Hopkins, they've added socioemotional programs to their reviews, to their aggregations. It's a very user-friendly site. I'm sure you've seen it, but it's something districts we find really like to use.

If you go to the next slide, you'll see some more resources on socioemotional supports. So, the US Department of Education has released a Best Practices Clearinghouse with a lot of really actually neat information, helpful information on social-emotional supports for students. And then you'll see RAND there has a nice compendium of socio-emotional supports as well. So, these are just some examples of reputable resources. Of course, there are others, but we just wanted to remind folks of where those are and how they can access them.

Next slide please. So, let's go back to the Connect with Kids example. Now, remember this district wanted to find a way to promote prosocial attitudes and to increase attendance. And we find when we look at Connect with Kids that the purpose of this program is to promote prosocial attitudes and behaviors as well as to teach students core values. And it's a grade three through 12 intervention. And in this case, we find it was reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse, so we found it on the What Works Clearinghouse. So, that's probably a pretty good resource. We're probably pretty confident, I should say, I'm sorry, in the source of the information in this case, given it was vetted independently.

Now, if we turn to the second of the four things, taken into consideration, thank you, on study design. This one is really, excuse me, kind of the meat, if you will, of really when you're considering your confidence in the findings of a research study, and of course people go to grad school to study research methodology, and we know that the folks in your districts often 'don't have that type of expertise, but there are a few things we can help them consider as SEAs to really, again, get them to be more critical consumers of the research about a specific intervention. So, I'm going to talk about that a little bit. And again, we have some tools in the REL that will help you think about all these different considerations and we'll provide links to those.

But let's look at the slide a little bit more carefully. So, of course, the stronger research design, the more confidence you have in the study, going from randomized control trials down to descriptive studies, where they covered that in those ESSA evidence tiers a little while ago. The larger the sample size, of course, you can have more confidence in the study findings because there were more students that it was tested on. You want to make sure a lot of students didn't drop out of a study because of course, when students drop out of a study that can really bias the findings often towards positive results. So, it's important to look at that as one piece of information. And another thing to keep in mind as well that decreases our confidence is when the studies usually have an established outcome measure, something that we've seen in other studies, something that you even use, or the district uses regularly. Often when a developer designs an outcome, it's so aligned with their program that it's really easy to find positive results.

So, I know that's a really quick overview of some of these things, and again, we have some tools, but this is the kind of information that we hope you can help districts think about when you're doing your guiding, as many of you might be doing, to help them select these programs. If we were to take this example again and go to the Connect with Kids example, let's kind of think about that as a hypothetical. So, when we looked at Connect with Kids off the What

Works Clearinghouse website, this is some of the actual information we found about that program. Next slide please.

So, in the Connect with Kids example, the research base for it was based on a quasi-experimental design, so they were students matched with other students. It met the WWC Clearinghouse standards with reservations, ESSA tier two, and we see the sample there was 800 students across 46 classrooms, and the outcome measures are listed below. So, I'm just going to ask you, if you could just type in the chat, when you look at this, would you have more or less confidence in the study design? Where would you kind of maybe rate it on a scale of one to five, one being very low confidence, five being high confidence? And maybe even more importantly as kind of with your antennae up, and by antennae you hope to have LEAs kind of sprouting up, what more information would you want? If Connect with Kids came to an LEA and said, "We have this great program, here's this great study," with this limited information they may have on a pamphlet, what else would you want to ask the developer? What more information would you need?

And we can look in the chat here if anyone's typing in. In a lot of cases, the devil's in the details as you're typing in your answers and that's why even if someone says, "Oh, we have a great RCT, we have a great quasi-experimental design," you really want to look carefully at how many students were tested, how many students dropped out, how they were measuring these outcomes. And so, hopefully those are the things that your LEAs will ask. Someone, Kim Benton, says, "I would like to know the distribution of elementary, middle, high school and other demographics." Right, so there were 800 altogether, but how many of each of those students were in the study? Because in this case you have a K through 12 district that wants to implement this program, so you might want to do a subpopulation analysis, you might want to see, was it statistically significant for just the high school kids? Was it just statistically significant for the elementary school kids, et cetera?

"Will it work outside the Midwest?" John Lockwood, that's a great point, and that gets to our fourth thing to take into consideration, I'm going to go through the third one first, but that relevance question's a great one. So, let's go down to the study findings slide, please. Next slide. Here are the study findings considerations, and this might seem kind of like a no-brainer, but things have gotten more complicated as Freddy Poitra pointed out in their question about effect size, right? Used to be really simple, we kind of taught people so to speak, to say, well, was there statistically significant differences or not? And of course you do want to find those statistically significant differences on the outcomes of interest. If you don't find that, then you really don't have a lot of confidence that that program is going to work.

But also important, and not instead of but in addition to statistical significance, we do want to impress upon LEAs to look at those effect sizes, and effect sizes are something that have become more a part of conversations now about consuming research and looking at research. It's a very nuanced topic, there's no cutoff, hard and square cut off like 0.05 that's a convention for effect size. And effect size always has to be looked at the broader context, right? What's it being compared to, business as usual, et cetera? But all other things being equal, once you find those statistically significant differences, the stronger effect of the program is going to show itself in larger effect sizes. And so, all of the things being equal, if you're comparing, if you' have the advantage of comparing more than one program for some kind of outcome you're trying to move, the one with those stronger effect sizes of course are going to probably be more beneficial and be the one you really want to consider adopting, getting more bang for the buck as Freddy said.

Of course, there's the other considerations like the time will be involved to implement the program, how much training, et cetera, and Lenay is going to talk about that a little later, but that's kind of a little quick and dirty overview of effect sizes and statistical significance.

So, the next slide we talk about the findings with Connect with Kids, say in this case with Connect with Kids, we did find, or the WWC did find those positive effects on behavioral outcomes. So, that's great. And then there were two student behavior outcome measures for middle and high school, and those were positive and statistically significant. So, not for the elementary kids, but for the middle and high school students. And the average effect size across those four outcomes averaged to .16.

So, again, type in the chat, if an LEA in your state came to you with this information, what might you think about it? Or if you were an LEA, what would you feel about these findings? You thinking about maybe you'd adopt it, are you confident that this might be the right program? And again, do you consider these effects strong or weak given what you know about effect sizes? And most importantly, or maybe not most importantly, but very importantly, what more information would you want to find out given what you already know? And you can type that in the chat. Again, we're just trying to have a through line here to get kind of a concrete example.

Now I know sometimes with .16, I think that there was kind of a convention for a while of .20 being an effect size that you want to shoot for. I think more recently, John Hattie has talked about .40 as kind of being this little tipping point there with the arrows. But really, it really just depends. If you have a really easy to implement, cheap program that seems to move the needle to a certain degree, and maybe it's some kind of quick and dirty intervention that you're doing along with other things, .16 might be a real winner for you in some contexts. In this context with Connect with Kids, it's probably something you want to ask yourself by looking at some of the other factors that you're going to have to take into consideration when you implement it, how hard it's going to be to implement, how much money it's going to cost, et cetera.

Are they planning to use this districtwide? Great question. Maybe this hypothetical district wants to use this intervention with its middle and high school students and maybe they want to think about or keep searching for something else with the elementary and kindergarten kids. Here's someone, Lenay Dunn, saying since the findings are not statistically significant at the elementary level, that would give me pause, right? Since LEA is trying to implement a K through 12, exactly, same point. And Colin Usher, what were the two behavioral outcome measures that were positive and statistically significant? Right, was this an attendance outcome measure? Was it some kind of acting out outcome measure? Was it a positive behavior measure? All really good questions, getting those in when we look at these studies, that's awesome.

Okay. And then the fourth consideration, and this is something that John Lockwood brought up a few minutes ago is the relevance. And this one is really important, although sometimes it gets lost in the conversation. So, say you have a study where you're highly confident of the sources, it was designed well, it was implemented well, the findings are awesome, right? It really moved the needle on an outcome of interest. But, if the population of students was completely different from the one you're interested in, then you might want to keep looking to see if there's other things that you have more confidence will work with your specific group of students. So, John Lockwood had the question, where was the study done? My district's in the

Midwest, maybe his district of 20,000 students in the Midwest, maybe it was a very homogeneous district, and the study was conducted in a heterogeneous district. Another example would be if you were looking for a writing program for elementary school kids, but you have a lot of ELL students in your school and the study was done in a school with a very low population of ELL students. You'd want to take those kinds of things into consideration. So, the more relevant study of course is going to be a population and setting that closely matches the one that the interests of your LEA. And then of course the outcomes of the study should be closely matched as well, and the less matched those are, the less relevant that study is going to be. So, that's a fourth consideration to think about. The last of the big four, so to speak. Can you go the next slide, please?

So, again, we're going to our example in the Connect with Kids study, the sample was 800 elementary, middle and high school students from 46 classrooms and that was in Kansas and Missouri, and we have the statistically significant outcomes for the middle and high school students, and they were reports of their own and their classmates' behaviors. So, there, we get to a little bit more about that measure and it was a suburban district. And you're looking for an... Sorry, the LEA setting you're looking for something for is a suburban district with 20,000 kids. So, there's just something to think about as you think about those four considerations and really think about the relevance component.

And I'm just wondering if anyone wants to type in the chat that anything they find LEAs have been asking more recently or in your state departments of ed, anything you've been thinking about in terms of the relevance or how research is really relating to your populations. Are there specific populations in your state that you're really going to have to focus on with regards to this recovery and relief funding? You can type that in while I look at this question. You said earlier, you would also consider this against costs, prioritizing needs of LEA, I would vet whether the researchers and those implementing this program are trained in cultural responsiveness. That's a really important point saying, and we're all thinking more about that I think than we even have in the past. And so, that's a really good consideration. So, I appreciate that input.

Next slide please. So, you've come now to this point where the LEA decides to explore this intervention, Connect with Kids. They said, "Okay, this matches pretty well with our population of students, we like the studies, the information we found about this program. Now we're going to plan to implement it." And again, you as an SEA are going to be providing some guidance and support with that. So, I'm going to turn it back over to my colleague, Lenay, and she's going to talk a little bit about the next step, helping LEAs with implementation.

LENAY DUNN

Great, thanks John. So, as there's that transition to planning in that five-step process that we show on the next slide, in the framework it's here where before we're moving into implementation, we're actually planning for it and we're thinking about what will it take to implement this strategy? So, on the next slide, we have some information, some key questions as you move from selection to implementation. So, what will it take to implement the strategy, to produce effective outcomes, and how well does it fit our context and constraints? These are important questions to ask because we know context matters.

So, it's not as simple as saying, "Here's an effective intervention, we're going to implement it with fidelity and we're going to get the same results." We know that local context can influence the way that strategies are implemented and the outcomes that result from them. So, really helping to empower the local decision makers to think about, what are those best interventions to fit their context of their system, is a really important piece because the context really does matter. And saying to your point, I think it''s a key piece of what the cultural context, other piece is, as they consider a strategy.

So, we're going to give you a few resources to help consider the fit to context. So, on the next slide we have the SEL Center Guide. So, this is a compendium of resources that some of our colleagues at the Center for Social and Emotional Learning and School Safety developed that has specifically for district leaders, what are some considerations as they seek to implement evidence-based strategies? What I really like about it is, it's organized by implementation phases or issues or considerations. So, if there's a need to create a vision, it has, here are all the resources to think about for implementing to create a vision. And it's also within a continuous improvement cycle. This is a really rich resource. I know many of you are trying to look at SEL interventions and strategies, I think this would be helpful to guide LEAs to think through implementation.

We also have another tool that is from our evidence-based improvement guide, it's Tool 6, and this has considerations for how well it might fit in the setting, a strategy fit. The purpose of it is to really have a discussion to compare some different interventions or strategies and think about which one might fit better in your context. And there are some specific pieces of that and contextual factors to consider that we call out on that tool. So, the next slide we have these elements, how well does it align to existing initiatives? So, Julie, if you could go to the next please, sorry.

How well does it align to existing initiatives? What kind of buy-in is there for the strategy? And that's a really important piece to think about. The infrastructure that's needed to carry it out, both physical and then organizational, are there coaches that are needed? Are there separate rooms that are needed for different pieces of a strategy? Do you have the infrastructure and the structure to carry it out? What kind of staff capacity and time does it take? And do you have that to lend to this? Is there an opportunity to call on other partners or is it required to have outside supports or partners to carry it out? And is there the capacity to do that? Saying to your point, the costs, what are those startup costs and also the ongoing costs? Because sometimes when we think about it, we might think about the initial purchase price or implementation price and we don't think about what it will take to maintain it and carry it through.

So, those are some considerations that are in Tool 6 to really help LEAs think about the fit and the context. So, carrying our example of Connect with Kids through, we took information, this is all information that can be found in the evidence snapshot that's on the What Works Clearinghouse — it's their snapshot of the intervention report. And what I really like about that report is it gives you some of these details. The other one that does this really well is the Evidence for ESSA can really call out some of these components. So, let's look at Connect with Kids. So, for alignment, the program can be incorporated into an existing curriculum or use a standalone, so there's some flexibility there. Considerations on leadership and staff buy-in, if the school or the teacher that decides on the number of character traits that might be covered in each session so the duration of it can really vary from a semester to an entire academic year, so there's some flexibility and that would be something the staff would have to agree on and decide upon the way to approach that.

It also includes lesson plans, a website component and schoolwide and community outreach components. So, as you think about pulling in outside support, you think about the kinds of staff time that would be needed. Some of the components are already there, that might be helpful. And this is a cost that was several years old when this snapshot was put together so you'd want to double check the updated costs, but the program and associated professional learning and the support for one year would cost about $4,000 per school. And then there's the ongoing support that is an extra cost. So, again, we're just using this as an example to be able to think this through. This may not be the right fit for any, and we're definitely not endorsing a particular one, but the point is really dig in and think about these things before you select it and helping LEAs really have those considerations before they make that selection and start to implement it.

So, I'm going to move to another tool that helps you think about the fit to context, which is on the next slide. It's the Applicability of Evidence-Based Interventions tool. So, this is a tool that was meant to compliment Tool 6. It came out of discussions that we had with our REL colleagues across the country, we really co-developed this, it came out of discussions where we said we serve LEAs that have little or no research that's done specifically in their settings. So, for example, extremely rural or serving a large number of indigenous students. So, in those contexts, sometimes there's not research that's been done exactly in those contexts with the exact same student populations. So, out of those conversations, we started to develop this tool to really help think about assessing the viability of an intervention in your context. I will note, as we developed this tool, we tested it and worked with LEAs really across the country and we had rural, urban, suburban, all different ones tested. So, though it was initially developed with rural specifically in mind, we found that it was relevant also to these other settings.

So, let's look at some of the contextual factors in that applicability tool. We have research alignment to the outcome of interest in the student population. So, we talked a little bit about that when John talked about the relevance. So, how similar is it to the student population and how similar is that outcome to the outcome you're actually trying to improve? Also staffing availability, so what kind of staff time is required to carry out the intervention or the strategy or the number of staff that are needed? So, if there are tutors that are needed or coaches that are needed, what kind of staff do you have for that? Access to technology and connectivity, we developed this tool pre-COVID and some of that has shifted, but COVID also really emphasized some of the disparities, and access to technology and connectivity, that can be considerations. So, if you're choosing a strategy or an intervention that has technology requirements, what are those, what access do you already have? What additional costs might that put on top of the strategy or the intervention, not even just for the upfront, but that ongoing to keep the technology updated? But also thinking about connectivity at home, if there's an at-home component to the strategy, do students have that connectivity? Another consideration was the potential for family engagement. So, what is the approach that that LEA is taking to family engagement? Are they trying to improve those strategies? How well could this intervention compliment some of those strategies or build on them? Professional development, what we talk about in the tool is really how close or what kind of access do you have to people who could provide the professional development on this tool? And again, this is less, I think, of an issue with the connectivity that we all are used to now with virtual trainings, but it can be really important to say, do you have someone that can come and actually do the professional development or not? Is it available there? Also, the importance of community leaders. This came out of conversations with tribal communities specifically, and thinking about how does it honor elders or others in the community, how could it bring in and build off of the knowledge of community leaders? Another consideration here. And then travel time to and from school, if this is an intervention that's meant to be at the end of a school day, what does that mean for the transportation pieces?

So, these are some of the factors that are in this applicability tool, so let's look at what it would look like with Connect with Kids. So, we probably would need more information on the demographics and the study sample. I think several of you noted that in the previous section, there are some specifics we probably want to line up with our demographics to better understand it. There is flexible staffing built into that Connect with Kids model, but they'd have to fit it into the school day. So, how available are staff to fit that into the school day? Or would you make it an afterschool or before school or other fit into another part of the day? You do need computer access for videos and materials so that's a consideration. This particular strategy or intervention does have a parent outreach, a set of videos for parents so that's an opportunity to engage parents and maybe that's something that would be really important or valuable, or you'd have to set up some additional supports around that. There is an option for remote training and professional development for this one, and there were opportunities to engage community groups and offered in class during the school day. I want to note again, we pulled all of this information from the evidence snapshot and some quick looks at their website. So, usually these are the kinds of information that are out that you can access as you look through this.

So, keeping all of this in mind, we're going to take a step back. At the end of this applicability tool, we have a scale of considerations to think about the viability of an intervention in the context. So, on the next slide we have this scale. So, if you step back and say, "Okay, I've looked at this, I've thought about how closely it might match my context," there are kind of three options for this. One is it seems viable, but we might need to dig into a couple more aspects to make a final determination; it may be viable, so we have some pause, and we need to really do some definite further review to decide; or, it doesn't appear to be viable in our context.

So, thinking about Connect with Kids, we have a poll, everything that we've taken you through in the last section, how viable do you think that this intervention or strategy is? Would it be viable, might be viable, or does not appear to be viable?

LENAY DUNN

So, the vast majority said that it may be viable, and we definitely need to do some further review. So, I think we talked about some aspects that we need to look into a little bit further. So, that's helpful to know as we go in it. And so, this is a tool we wanted to show you how these different tools could be used to support your work with LEAs and some considerations that you might take them through. Okay, go ahead, next.

So, as we close this section, we have a few key questions that we encourage you to help LEAs ask, and this could be asking of vendors or others that they're getting potential strategies or interventions from. The source, so who produced the study on the effectiveness of it and where was it published? How was the study designed and carried out? And was there a comparison group? Those are some really key components to look for. What outcomes were measured, and did they improve significantly? And really thinking about those outcomes, what were they? I think that's important to dig into. And then finally, how well does it reflect our context, both the setting and the population of our context? Are those outcomes relevant to what we're trying to achieve? Go back to those needs, it has to be grounded in the needs. Does it address the needs that we're looking to improve? And importantly, does it require supports that exceed our capacity?

So, these are some key questions. If you had to just give a few questions to LEAs that we wanted you to take away from this part of the session. We're going to move into some state breakouts now to have an opportunity to dig into some of these concepts a little bit more. So, in the next slide, we give some directions for doing that. So, the goal of this is to help you really think about how you're going to support LEAs in using their funds effectively for evidence-based strategies. So, we have three topic options. The way we're going to work these breakouts, most of you, if you're here with a team, you'll be with your state. If you're not here with a larger team, we do have some cross state opportunity. There's three topics, and you're going to choose one.

What is your SEA's approach to supporting LEAs in selecting evidence-based practices using those ARP funds? So, that first section, when we thought about the continuum and where you fall on that continuum, we have some tools and questions for you to dig into there if that's interesting to you. The second topic is, what guidance will you provide for specifically thinking about accelerating learning, and social-emotional supports? And this topic you'll really dig into that improvement cycle and think about what guidance and supports you provide already and what you might need to provide more along the way. And the third option is, what fit and applicability considerations does your SEA want to highlight with LEAs? So, I'm thinking about your comment, culturally responsiveness would be something that might be very particular that you want LEAs to really think about as they think about fit and applicability. So, those are the three options as you dig into it, you'll have a REL, so our regional educational laboratory staff member who is related to or serves your region, and a CC colleague to facilitate this, and we'll have an opportunity when we come back to share out. There are some Google doc notetaking forms for each SEA group, we have that set up. And then, we'll have a share out slide deck where you're just going to choose one... 'you'll tell us what topic that you chose and then a key next step that we're going to share out when we come back together. Julie, anything that I left out in terms of instructions for the breakout groups?

JULIE DUFFIELD

No. And I think we just have to... we'll have 30 minutes in this breakout, just confirming for folks.

LENAY DUNN

Thank you. Yes. That's important information.

JULIE DUFFIELD

Right. Thanks, Lenay. I think we're ready to put folks into their teams, so we'll stop the sharing, and we'll put you at breakouts and send you some reminder messages when the group's about to come back.

JOHN RICE

Thank you. I know someone was chiming in, and I welcome my CC colleagues as well and REL colleagues to chime in as well as others as we go through this, but what we want to do now is we want to just get a sense for the next few minutes of what were the topics that you all, as

SEAs and your staff, chose to discuss during the past few minutes, and one concrete action step that you think you will take as a result of your discussion, and of course, maybe you didn't quite get to that step, but given the notes and things you talked about, something that seems possible or feasible, I should say, as a next action step. So, maybe we'll go through some of the states here, and I'll just call out maybe for volunteers. Is there a breakout session who might want to unmute someone representative and—

SYLVETTE SANTIAGO

Puerto Rico.

JOHN RICE

There you go, Puerto Rico.

SYLVETTE SANTIAGO

Yes. Hi. Hi, everyone. My name is Sylvette Santiago. I am from R3 CC. We spoke in the breakout section regarding what supports that OREs that for us would be LEAs. And as we were discussing, here in Puerto Rico, as I said, our LEAs... We're a unitary system, so think of our LEAs as regional education offices. And we discussed, there was a need for the regions to have some sense of autonomy. Also, they need to fill in their staffing positions and restructure of the staff so that there is a distribution within the staff, according to their areas of interest and expertise, but also to see what other human resources are needed to recruit.

Also, a data management system. There are many, many data points in PRDE, but we need to identify the correct data to be used, that could be used for the region's LEAs. The continuous technical assistance, not only of R3CC, but also DOE, regarding the use around these funds. What is permissible and what is not, and more than just what is not permissible, to say not, to say why, and to be very clear why, because there are some areas where it's just not permissible. So, why is that not permissible, and for that information to be disseminated for everyone at PRDE so that everyone has the same answer. If they go to someone in federal affairs, they gave them the same answer. Someone in academic, that has the secretary of education, that streamlined communication is very clear, it's very necessary.

We also would like to have more participation from each region on these meetings that we're having, these workshops that we're having, because it is the regions that are receiving a lot of... It will receive a lot of the work that has to be done, so they should be an integral part of this. They should be very much at the table discussing the needs. We have seven regions, but we need a representation of each, but it's not every region is the same at all, they're very, very different. And just more clarity from the federal government on the use of those funds, but that is consistent and continuous. I think I got everything, if I miss something.

SPEAKER 2

You did great.

JOHN RICE

Thank you, Sheila. That was a really nice summary of a discussion. I appreciate you sharing that.

SPEAKER 2

Oh, it was Sylvette Santiago, sorry, I just want to make sure.

JOHN RICE

I'm sorry. Too many Ss. I apologize.

SPEAKER 2

It's okay.

JOHN RICE

Sylvette. Okay. How about someone... We only have a few minutes, so what about another state? Territory? Want to share something out?

APRIL

Well, I could share from group seven. This is April.

JOHN RICE

Okay, please.

APRIL

So, group seven really was comprised of folks representing the BIE, Oklahoma, the Virgin Islands, and... Oklahoma... Let's see, did I miss somebody else... California. So, in our discussion, we found that in Oklahoma, they were consulting with their districts and schools and using that similar approach that they had with the CSI schools, and they were using competitive grants and found that in some cases, some of the vendors and schools were having a little bit of a struggle, so they were providing workshops to support them in being able to do what was needed. Additionally, Oklahoma has weekly meetings with their superintendents to provide that support. And then with New Mexico and the VI, their application process is a little different in looking at the BIE, not New Mexico itself, they've already submitted their application, but in looking at the BIE and the VI, they're following a somewhat different application process with a later submission date, but again, they are still focusing on identifying their needs and using meaningful, thoughtful strategies to be able to use the ARP funds as meant to support the students.

And also going back to the VI, the VI has a collaborative design team approach in which they're pulling together state and district leadership to identify needs so that they can use their funds wisely. That's it.

JOHN RICE

Thank you, April, I appreciate that. I think we've had someone talk about topic one and two. Is there anyone who... and we just have about two minutes left. Anyone want... Any state, territory want to talk about how they address number three, which is the applicability issue? I believe...

LENAY DUNN

Nevada was the...

JOHN RICE

Yeah, I know.

LENAY DUNN

The slides look like that might've been the one.

JOHN RICE

I think they picked me to report out. Is someone... Does Eric, maybe you ought to go, or is there someone from the state who might want to tackle?

ERIC CRANE

Sure, John. I can try and get us started and then...

JOHN RICE

On the spot there.

ERIC CRANE

Yeah, I can speak for the Nevada group in topic three, and then invite folks to pick up the thread from there. There was a lot of discussion about different contextual considerations, certainly different student groups. In Nevada, there's really Clark County with Las Vegas and then everywhere else, and that point was made up. And so, the different LEAs would need to provide evidence that relates to their context, so there's going to be a real urban/rural divide. And then, it was also brought up how many students were lost during the COVID pandemic, and aren't back to school, so efforts that tie into students being back at school were also important.

The point was made about the tendency to revert back to old patterns, and in terms of one next step or action to hold at the center, that this is an opportunity to get back to a new way of thinking. It's not just snap back to the way things used to be done. We know things work in certain LEAs and it's frustrating when other LEAs won't pick up that thread, so seeing things get applied and replicated in other places where we already have some evidence that it works somewhere else. With that, I'll invite you, John, Tran, and others in the Nevada team to expand. Or we can move on.

JOHN RICE

Well, we are right on time, but I don't want to cut off anyone from Nevada if they want to add or correct anything. Yeah. So, I just want to thank the states and Puerto Rico for sharing out. I think that was really helpful to really hear some examples of how you folks have taken some of the things we've talked about this morning, and I know we've talked quite a bit, but you've taken those and thought about how you're going to apply those in your own states, in your own contexts. And so, even those of you who didn't get a chance to share out, I think it's helpful to hear those examples.

So, you can take that with you after this session, but for now, I do want to start our 10-minute break, because if you're anything like me, you have a hard time sitting still for a long time, but you all have been very patient, this is really an engaged group. So, we're going to break for 10 minutes, and we're going to come back and talk about measurements when we return. Thanks. Is there anything else, Julie, I should add to that, or are we good?

JULIE DUFFIELD

We're good. We'll put the times back. Folks will be back here just five minutes to the hour, thank you.

JOHN RICE

Thank you.

TRAN KEYS

Wonderful. Thank you for returning and hanging with us.

This next section that we're covering is called Measuring the Effectiveness of Evidence-Based Practices. And so, in the next slide, we want to bring back the steps of the evidence-based improvement that Lenay and John had been using throughout the presentation. We're going to go now finish this loop here of the continuous improvement with implement and analyze, and we will do so with the continuation of the Connect For Kids example that both Lenay and John have referenced throughout. We're hoping that's going to help really ground you in using this tool. I would just want to start up with this quote from the guides. It's a very short quote, but I really love it, which is that the guide talks about evidence-based decision-making and reflection are the core of the entire continuous improvement process, and are used in each step. I'm sorry, Julie, can you go back to the previous slide, thank you.

I just wanted to point out here that the steps here overlap with each step leading into the next step. So, for the example that we're going to use, the analyze step actually begins before the implement step is even completed, and so you notice a color shading of this, there's overlap in the color shading, correct? That's what we're trying to communicate with this graphic, that there's definitely overlap. These are the steps, and they work with each other, in a sense. In the next slide, I mentioned, we are going to ground this in the Connect With Kids example, so from the previous or earlier morning session, we talked about how let's say in the lowest step, the LEA has decided to implement the intervention in K-12, they've made this decision. Their next step now is that they're going to, they are setting up measures to assess how well the Connect With Kids are working in the context. We kept saying that repeatedly this morning, that the context is super critical to consider. Third, they aim to improve behavior and SEL in the short-term, that's their short-term outcomes they want to look at and to measure, and then in the longer-term, medium to long-term, they're looking at school climate and data such as the graduation rates, that's the long-term considerations. And then finally, they must analyze and report on the cost of the intervention. So, this section, John and I will cover, we'll walk us through these steps.

And I'll say, similar... Thank you, Julie. Similar to our this morning session, we will... It's pretty interactive. We'd love for you to type in the chat. We have several prompts for you, and we're using Zoom chat just because we're all here and it's easy to be able to shoot your answer in chat. What we're doing in the backend that you're not seeing is that we're actually trying to compile your responses in a Padlet so that when we send you the link with the recording and the materials, we'll also send a link to the Padlet that you can go back and review the references and the ideas that... there's a collective experience here, right? There's a lot of people on this call, a lot of good work being done in the SEAs, and so, we want to share the collective experience, the struggles that you guys bring up in the chat in answering the questions, and also just the wisdom of the group. So, keep that in mind, and that's hopefully an incentive for you to please continue to answer our questions in the chat.

All right. The next slide... I'm sorry, so this slide on implementing and analyzing interventions, we're doing a lot of this in this session, which is really giving you these questions, what we would call foundational questions for you to consider and for you to consider with the districts, with the LEAs that you work with, and so, the three questions here are, how well is the program working in our context, question that is in terms of implementing and analyzing, we want to... It's at the forefront. What factors are contributing to our results? Why are we getting the results we're getting, and what data should we examine to assess this? So, these are some... Just starting out with three questions that we want you to consider as you work with LEAs and support them. So, right now, we're going to ask you, in the chat, if you could share with us, what other key questions do you think of when we think of implementing and analyzing interventions? Go ahead and take a moment here and type in the chat.

Eric shared with us a good question to ask is, are things working as well for all student groups? Good point, Eric. You're helping me set the stage here for the next future slides. Susan, how often is the program being implemented and at what times? Excellent, Susan. Were there unintended consequences, John, yes. Frequency and duration, Freddy. Thank you. Colin, how long has the program been in place? Sylvette, how often are you measuring evaluating? Mary, fidelity of implementation? Wow, this is awesome. So, our person who's helping us with the Padlet, you got a lot of stuff to share now on the Padlet. Thank you, everyone. Is the investment — Jason, thank you — is the investment required to sustain implementation with positive results sustainable? Well, definitely. So, you got it. These are the types of questions we want our LEAs to consider when we work with them, and so this section is really specifically about measurement, and we're really going to give a very high-level overview of measurement.

In the other workshops we've done, we can get really weedy, and I was told, do not get into much of the weeds because we don't have time, so I'm going to do my best here. And then the next slide, we're going to talk about measures, and in particular, when we talk about measures, we like to separate them into process versus outcome measures. I think I recognize some of the participants on this call, and I know that you've heard us talk about this in other contexts, and so when we talk about process measures, process is about assessing how well and to what extent the program was delivered, as we intended it to be, right? So, it's about the quality of implementation. And these process measures are so critical in terms of us, the LEAs, whoever's looking at the data, whoever's looking at the programs, making assessments of the program's effectiveness. It helps us make formative adjustments on the implementation, because if we're constantly monitoring and collecting data on the process measures, we can make changes pretty immediately, so it's great to have these process measures in place.

On the other side, we have something called, excuse me, outcome measures, and outcome measures are more in what we would put lump into the cycle that we shared into the analyze bucket, so it's very much focused on results. And here you see some of the blurbs we've written about here for outcome measures. Some examples, very general examples, you would say, would be about the changing practice, behavior, outcomes, and of course, in K12 education, we're always looking at academic performance, focusing on results. Do you have process measures and you have outcome measures, both are needed, both are important.

In the next slide, again, connecting back to Connect With Kids example that now you're quite familiar with, we went through and looked at the reference that Lenay shared with us in the beginning, and here are some potential process measures that we pulled from there, and also some potential outcome measures. So, I'll let you take a look at this list. As you're looking at this list, and the first time I did this activity looking at this list, it really, really reminded me of something I do pretty regularly with LEAs and teams in my own work as well, which is logic models, right? Or the other partner to it, theory of action, theory of change. That's what I think of a lot when I think about these potential process measures and outcome measures, this list of things that we're showing you right now, and with this, I think about process measures. In the logic model, the step of, you have resources and inputs that lead to activities that lead to outputs that lead to outcomes, that's the logic model thinking. Well, this list of potential process measures, to me, really looked like they would fit in the bucket of the outputs, things that we can count, things that we can count immediately to say, did we meet the number of targeted teachers that we wanted to train? Do we serve the number of students we said we were going to serve? These are things that you can collect, and if you haven't met them, because it's process measures, you can try to do something about that, correct that as soon as possible. And then outcome measures really are more towards in the logic model continuum, it's about the outcomes, right? Some are short outcomes, more to the mid and longer term outcomes. So, just want to let you know, make a connection to something that some of you are already familiar with, which is putting together things like theory of action, theory of change, and logic models.

So, in the next slide, what we want to ask you is those are just some examples of process measures, can you share with us what you've been hearing in the field about process measures? What are some examples of process measures you expect LEAs to report on? So, let's start with process measures first in the chat. I'm always curious as someone who works with data often, I want to know what LEAs are using. Rochelle, thank you. Timeliness of funds, availability, and expenditures. Susan, number of students in an afterschool program, right. John, number of PLCs that are created. Okay. Well, those are a few. Please feel free to put more, but let me move on to what are some process... Excuse me. What are some outcome measures you expect LEAs to report on? What are some outcome measures? Okay. Susan, I saw your response, number of students... Excuse me. Zoom is going fast here. Susan, number of pre-K programs. That's still process, right Susan? Thank you. So, now we're getting into the outcome measures, same question, but what are some of the examples of outcome measures that you expect your LEAs to report on? And here's just to remind you about what we mean by outcome, as some examples. Right John, right. Achievement, which is... A specific example John provided is about an increase in reading scores. Growth scores in ELA and math, right. Number of suspensions for behavior, Kim. Program... Oh, okay, great. The Zoom chat is going fast here, this is great. Performance and growth by student groups.

Right. Exactly. These are the things that folks are using, right? And I just want to make a mention that I noticed earlier, I think someone wrote number of suspensions for behavior, and so I think a lot of times when we ask... Thank you, Kim, for putting that in. A lot of times when we ask a question like this, it's predominantly about looking at things that are more of, right? More achievement, more proficiency, greater disparate of that, but of course, there are things we want to reduce as well. So, Kim, thank you. Number of suspensions for behavior. We want to reduce suspensions, expulsions. We want to reduce chronic absenteeism, for example, so wonderful. Excellent. Thank you for participating everyone.

So, I'm going to keep moving here, and in the next slide, we're going to talk a little bit about setting targets for your outcome measurement, and so similar to what I said earlier, in this situation when we talk about having targets,...I'm so sorry. I'm being a little distracted here with a lot of noise from my neighbor working on their house, so I'm hoping that you all don't hear that.

JULIE DUFFIELD

No, we're good, Tran.

TRAN KEYS

Okay, thank you. I can hear it very loudly. Julie, thank you. So, for this section, we want to just to remind you that it's really important to set targets, and when we talk about outcome measurement, we really are saying that the measurement begins in the planning phase of when you set targets for progress, and so that's why I brought up the issue of the theory of action and logic models, because that's towards the beginning of when you look at a program, right? In the next slide, what you'll see is that for... We're going to talk to you about two buckets, the academic and then social-emotional, but for outcome measures, we separate them into formative and interim benchmarks.

And here's just a few that are often brought up when we talk to our LEAs, partners, and then some common summative benchmarks, and this should look familiar to very many of you who are working in this field. The next section is about social-emotional, the same idea, but also now giving you some social and emotional examples. And this is a pretty long list, so I definitely won't read it to you, and again, we've mentioned, we'll get the slide deck and recording to you, but our Comp Center colleagues reviewing the plans, social and emotional came out a lot as an important area to focus on, so we want to make sure we had this slide in for your reference.

And then in the next slide, what we want to bring up is that with the Connect With Kids example, we're here really... Just keep in mind that these are hypothetical data, and the idea here is just so that you can see some examples, a real example with Connect With Kids on how we might look at some potential progress benchmarks and potential outcome targets. And so here, I think my... What's nice about this is it shows the kinds of targets that districts might identify, and this is one of the things that we work with SEAs, LEAs, partners on. And I think the biggest takeaway for me with doing this work is that sometimes the goals, the benchmarks and the targets are what would be considered probably not reasonable, right? So, we wanted to give you some guidance on what that means, and it's a discussion, right? What's reasonable in one district, not necessarily reasonable in another, back to the message about context matters. But I remember working once with a district that wanted to improve graduation rates by 20%, the next year. And in looking at their data, which is really important, looking at their longitudinal, like multiple years of data and how the progress they made, they were not making even 2% growth. In fact, they dipped quite a bit. And so, for them to make such a big change in their benchmarks was not feasible. Right? So, just kind of providing some guidance to LEAs about that, they will find very helpful.

And then in the next slide is the final chat in this section where we want to ask you again, what are some examples of progress benchmarks that you expect LEAs to report on? So, we'll start with progress benchmarks first. Interim assessment data, right, Freddy. People often use that, right? Especially in this year or this past year of missing summative data, that was real important to have interim assessment data. Okay. What about some examples of outcome targets then?

LENAY DUNN

Sure, the few... the cost benefit is brought up, some specifics… Stacy brought up the number of children enrolled or number of children with disabilities in inclusive settings. So, that might be a particular outcome target. They might set a number that they're looking to ensure. Program specific data or progress benchmarks, absenteeism rates, number of students exiting EL programs, and increases in performance for math and ELA district.

TRAN KEYS

Wow. That's a lot. Thank you everyone. Thanks for sharing with us, 'that's really informative for us as well. Okay. And I still don't have my chat, so I think I'm just going to move on for the sake of time, but thank you everyone for sharing out. This next section, I'm going to hand it over to John, and John's going to give us an overview of cost analysis, which is another important component in measuring the effectiveness of evidence-based practices. So, John's going to go over the why and the what, and John, handing it over to you.

JOHN RICE

Sure. Thank you, Tran. I appreciate it. Don't worry, the cost analysis part, isn't going to be too long, but we did want to cover this because we feel it is an important part of the data collection accountability piece, but it also relates to some of those issues of sustainability that folks were bringing up earlier.

But before I jump into it, why don't we do our poll first? I think this is maybe our last poll or second last poll of the day. But, if someone could throw it up there, the question is, has your SEA used cost analysis to assess the effectiveness of an intervention? And you've got three choices yes, no, or you might not be sure. So, we'll watch those numbers come in. This is more exciting than the mayor's race in New York. Sorry, I had to be topical. Unsure, which is what we figured might be the majority response, because often there may be cost analysis being done in an SEA, but it's not necessarily in your shop or it may have been done at one point, but it hasn't continued. So, we have about half of the people responding and it looks like a pretty good majority is unsure maybe with a quarter that said yes. So, that's very interesting. So, it sounds like you folks have some experience or at least your SEA does with cost analysis, but we do want to go over this particularly in the ARP context.

So, I am going to jump right in here and talk about the why of cost analysis as well as the what. So, a few things to remember is that one thing that cost analysis does is it supports addressing certain federal requirements. And as you all know, in the American Rescue Plan and the funds that are coming down from the US Department of Education and other government agencies, there are equity provisions and maintenance of equity. And, and there is a provision to maintain the equity of how resources are doled out by the states and the LEA. So, that's one reason to make sure that there's a cost analysis.

The other is it can help to gather more complete and accurate information about costs to inform resource use. So often when folks are selecting a program, they're thinking about some of the things, some of the factors that are going to add up the cost such as the initial cost of the program, the initial training and so forth. But there's often other costs or hidden costs that aren't always thought of in the upstart, which need to be taken into consideration. And then finally, there are things that aren't always accounted for – in-kind resources, owned resources, something also economists like to call opportunity costs, that is, the things that you're not doing in order to implement a certain program. There's only certain so many hours in the day, at least, a certain number of resources for PD. So, there's those opportunity costs as well. If you could go to the next slide, please.

So, that's the why. Now, the what of cost analysis... there are different ways of doing cost analysis. Let me just put it that way. So, the what can vary, but folks in the education and social sciences sectors often focus on something called the ingredients method. And there are three basic steps of the so-called ingredients method that makes up the what. First you have to identify your resources or ingredients that are necessary to implement a program. So, these really run the gamut. It's the cost for the PD to train teachers and staff on implementing the program. It's the cost of the program itself. It might be the cost of supplemental materials. It might be the cost of upgrading your computer network in the district in order to implement the program. So, all of those are ingredients that needed to be taken into consideration.

Next is someone has to place a value on each ingredient. And then finally someone sums the value of those to determine a cost. Now, we have a tool for this. It sounds like we've been saying that all day, but the RELs like to come up with these tools to help individuals at the states and locals to work with these kinds of things. So, we do have as part of that toolkit, a cost analysis tool and that's the toolkit Lenay and Tran had been referring to. And so, if you can download that and it goes through all of these steps, and I'll talk a little bit more about the tool in a minute.

Finally, you also have to take into consideration — who's going to pay for these, describe the ingredients. And finally, the last bullet there, the last stripe is very important because in order to really do this well, you need to have some kind of implementation data collected at the level where the program's being implemented in order to really ascertain some of these things. Some of these costs are going to be estimates, right? Estimates, based on people's time and how much they're paid in salary, but it''s still doing some of this is often better than just doing nothing at all. And being kind of, not aware of all the hidden costs of a program.

Next slide please. So, here''s that tool I''ve mentioned. Oh, I''m sorry. Can you go one slide back? I'm a little bit ahead. Here's the tool I mentioned, and the tool has many sections. It has a section on start-up costs. It has a section on ongoing costs, but for the sake of this conversation, we'll focus a little on the start-up costs, right? And these are some examples of the questions the tool asks - equipment, initial training costs, initial implementation costs, the materials, et cetera. And then of course the ongoing costs. And this is something that some of you brought up in the chat earlier, for example, Susan from Nevada made a comment in the chat earlier that one of her concerns is that after this funding is used up, so to speak, that districts aren't going to be able to sustain some of these really great programs that they've implemented with the recovery funding. So, one of the ways that districts can deal with this and trying to predict if they can sustain some of these programs when funding dries up is to do an analysis of cost. So, this tool we have here can help LEAs do some of those estimations.

So, the next slide with the whisk there goes back to our example, what's nice about some of these little summaries on the What Works Clearinghouse, as Lenay has been pointing out, they do contain a lot of valuable information and some of them contain more information about the program materials and costs themselves. So, going back to our social-emotional program, Connect with Kids, you'd want to look at things like cost of program materials, PD, and training, but also think about training for new staff who join after the initial training. How much is that going to cost? It's clear from the write-up that computers are needed for the classrooms to implement this program. Do those already exist or is that going to be a new cost? Also, thinking about the maintenance costs of keeping those computers up to date so they can run the software. Then there's ongoing PD support. And then finally to really get a cost per pupil or cost per teacher, you're going to need the numbers of teachers and the hours it takes for them to implement as well as the number of students you can serve with a single license or in your building with the amount of equipment and infrastructure that you have. So, in the Connect with Kids example, you want to take those things carefully into consideration and think about not only how are you are going to implement the program during the period of recovery funding, but if you want to sustain it, what's that going to entail?

Next slide please. So, there are certain ways that state education agencies can facilitate this kind of thinking among districts. And one is when you're asking districts to report on program implementation, that they do report some data on costs and cost analysis. And granted LEAs are being burdened with a lot of compliance requirements and so forth, but it is nice to get folks that at the LEA level, in the habit of thinking about these kinds of analyses, because they do have a benefit again, when they're planning future programs, as well as current programs. There can also be technical support, of course, the districts and helping them think about cost issues. And then one of the things that we've seen is effective is pairing this cost analysis requirement with evaluation studies. So, we're seeing more and more that when studies come out in journals, that journals are requiring developers to include the costs in the research report. And it also makes sense then on the ground to ask LEAs to do kind of a reality check and also to think about how much it's costing in their specific context.

So, does anyone have... Before I move to the next slide, any comments or questions about costs? I want to see what people are saying here. Okay. Not much now. So, why don't we move to the second breakout and we can go to the next slide actually.

Okay. So, here's what we're going to do now, we are going to mix it up a little bit. Before you were with your own states, but now you're going to be with other states. So, here's what we want you to think about in these breakouts. Based on what you've heard today, what's one thing you can share and leave with others? Leave one, take one kind of thing. And then what is one idea you'll take away from today's session? And most importantly, to think about future, what is one thing your state still needs? Okay. So, what will you take? What will you share? What does your state still need? And again, please be prepared to share a summary, maybe just about two minutes each for the groups we call on when we come out of these breakouts. So, I think Julie, I think you're the one.

JULIE DUFFIELD

Yes. We'll break you into the groups now, John.

JOHN RICE

Yep.

LENAY DUNN

All right. Well, welcome back everyone. We hope you had good conversation. Was floating around and hearing some of your conversation. I wanted to, before we get to the share out, I just wanted to lift up something saying that you put in the chat right before we went to the groups about the importance of the SEA, helping LEA set aside funds and reserve funds for evaluation. And just wanted to share that point because I think that's really helpful.

JULIE DUFFIELD

So, we will also share the link to the Google doc. So, if folks want to see what other teams wrote, they can also bring it up themselves.

LENAY DUNN

Perfect. Great. Thank you. So, we're going to do a brief share out. We'd love to hear, you know, you had an opportunity to get across states and hear some takeaways from across the states. We're just going to spend about just a few minutes doing that share out. So, I'd like to see if there's someone who would like to volunteer, to share for their group. And if you could tell us what group you're from that helps us be able to project the right share out slide. So, do I have a volunteer?

MARIE MANCUSO

So, this is Marie, I'll volunteer, be the spokesperson for our group nine. Our group shared some takeaways from today, supporting LEAs in using, and considering all the tiers of evidence-based practices, including, but not limited to tier four. Learning about the available resources and tools to support LEAs, several participants mentioned that. The cycle that you shared on the planning and improvement cycle and the tools that align with that, and the information and understanding of the process of examining the research on those four dimensions. And then the last but not final takeaway from today was how to collect and analyze data with some examples of what that looks like. And then one thing the group shared in terms of a need, and these were some common needs across the group, a larger discussion regarding the cost analysis piece and emphasizing the idea of developing a plan, then budgeting that plan and budgeting that plan in consideration of the cost analysis, both at the front end of planning, but also in measuring effectiveness.

LENAY DUNN

Yeah. Great. Well, thank you, Marie. And I want to just note, I think that some of the takeaways as I was floating across the rooms, the tool piece, the tools people were bringing up, some people said, "oh, I've seen them before, but I haven't really dug into them," and really wanting to go back to them and really, think about how to use them, that's going to be a takeaway. And it's helpful to hear the cost analysis piece. We didn't have a lot of time today to dig too much into it and it can vary in complexity. So, that's helpful to me. So, thank you. Mario, I see you had your hand raised. Are you going to share out? Can you tell us what group you're from?

MARIO

Group six I believe.

LENAY DUNN

Thank you.

MARIO

Okay. So, the group discussion was really rich and there were some things that really stood out as you see in the screen there. But one of the things they want to share and leave with others is they felt more confident and appreciated the tools that were presented in that they were given a good foundation, a good pathway to follow. Steps, to really secure programming, looking at programming and make it beneficial for their schools from LEAs. Need for LEAs to put funding aside, to study whether interventions are working. So, while it's important to look to spend the money on a program or a product or individuals coming in, but it's also important for the backend, do you have enough money, do you have the capacity, which should really sustain that to really give you a good reading of, are your interventions working or are they not working? Do they need improvement, revisions, et cetera?

And lastly, it's okay to ask important questions to providers and vendors. That was really relevant in the discussion, in that the team members said that, if this was your own money, how would you spend it? Would you ask questions, so taking that same type of mentality or thinking and applying to it in your school setting, as well as if it was your own money, wouldn't you ask questions? So,, you know, practice the same way. And thinking short-term and long-term as well, think of your immediate need, but also think of what's the long term. What are you going to need money for down the road as well?

The takeaway from today's session — look at the cost analysis tool. So, it was important to really kind of go in and investigate what it's going to cost you, and what's the true cost to that. And we also pointed Tool 6, there were eight categories and questions that are important to guide states and local districts. That was something that was a good takeaway for the group. And also, the tools help to develop more rich conversations between the LEAs and the SEA, if you will, and opening up these dialogues in different avenues and paths to really develop good, good discussions and fostering good communication down the road. And one of the things that they felt they needed was LEA capacity worries me at times, schools and districts are struggling, as we all know, and still trying to recover in terms of staffing. So, it's important to seek to spend these monies, but it's also important to understand, do we have the staffing, or do we have the resources with which to implement and continue to operate it?

And lastly, other schools, a lot of the schools are located in rural areas, so it's difficult to hire. So, that's another aspect to that as well as the shortage of staff. But if you're a rural area in particular, are you going to be able to hire staff to really help the programming? So, that was our group.

LENAY DUNN

Great, thank you so much, Mario. So, I think it's really helpful to hear a through line from a lot of the groups of, really reflecting on how do we spend the money on, because there is a lot of money in guiding LEAs and spending that money on strategies that meet their needs, that will be sustainable, and that they've really considered what it's going to take to carry those out. So, thank you all. I really appreciate you being in those sessions. And as Julie mentioned, you can look at those Google slides to see what other groups, some of their takeaways were as well. So, thank you very much. We're going to transition back to closing as we just have a few minutes left.

So, one of the things as we close is to think about your feedback from this session. It's really important to us. We use your feedback to improve the work that we're doing. So, I think we're going to put this link in the chat as well for you to please... oh, thank you. Delphean put this in the chat to complete the survey for feedback. It would be really helpful to get that. As we mentioned, we'll share the slides and we will share the materials. We have a Padlet where we've captured what's in the chat and we'll share that as well. It does take a while for the recording to get posted on the IES website. So, that will come a little bit later, but we can share the other materials before that. So, thank you. Please do take that survey. We will use that information.

We do have this open office hour time set aside for the next hour. If you'd like time to meet with your CC or REL to have some questions, some specific one-on-one conversations, we will have that available to you. If you haven't yet registered at this point, we've had two SEAs, two different SEAs and individuals from those register. It's okay. You still have an opportunity to do so. So, here's the link, please do register so that we can get you to the right room and make sure that we have a REL and CC colleague there to join you. So, same to my REL and CC colleagues, if you haven't yet registered, please do. In case one of your SEAs shows up there, we'd love to have that opportunity to connect with you.

You'll get these slides. We want to point out just some key resources for you that we integrated throughout that we suggest you look at. I know that there's some great tools that are out there. We've given you a lot of tools. Check some of these out. These are some specific ones we think would be helpful to you. Cost analysis, as we mentioned, can get very complicated, but there are some tools right here that you can use and dig into a little bit more. And then of course we have some references as well. So, I'm going to hand it over. I want to just say thank you all very much for this opportunity. We really appreciate the opportunity to connect with you all doing the work in the states. And we appreciate the opportunity from our CC colleagues to share this information with you and to collaborate with you. And I want to thank my REL colleagues — REL Southwest, REL Northeast & Islands as well for joining us today. So, Sarah, I'm going to hand it over to you. Thank you again. We really appreciate it.

SARAH BARZEE

Right. Thank you so much, Lenay and good morning and good afternoon, everyone. My name is Sarah Barzee and I serve as the director of the Region 2 Comprehensive Center. On behalf of my colleagues in Regions 3, 15 and 13, I want to echo Lenay's thanks first and foremost to our participants who took the time and made the time to be with us today for this incredibly important information around strategic planning for these unprecedented funds that we've all received. I also want to thank our team. These sessions do not just come together. We have incredible support from a planning team from across Region 2, 13 and 15, with special thanks to Del, Julie, and Dalia Zabala. And I'd like to thank our presenters. This was our first formal collaboration. Of course, we collaborate with our RELs quite routinely. This was our first opportunity to collaborate and to tap the expertise of our RELs partners in a CC session.

So, with hearty thanks, to Lenay Dunn, and John Rice, and Tran Keys for the excellent information, the opportunity to collaborate with one another and to begin thinking about, or continue thinking about, strategic planning for the use of the federal funds that are coming your way. And I'd also like to echo Lenay's thanks for those CC colleagues and REL colleagues who joined to facilitate, take notes, and just keep conversations going in our cross-state breakouts. So, thank you very much.

So, at this time, I'd like to just preview and echo Lenay's request that you complete the survey. We do take your feedback seriously; we value and appreciate your feedback. And as importantly, we do use that to plan forward. So, our goal as CCs and RELs is to support your SEA teams as you do your work in your own teams and supporting your LEAs.

So, please use the survey as an opportunity to help us to plan our next session, which, date to be determined, but it will be planned in August. And what we're planning at this point is a very important move from the strategic planning and selection of evidence-based practices that you heard spoken about today, to the also important progress monitoring, data collection, accountability, and reporting. As we've heard, if you've been on our previous sessions, Jason, in particular, as well as Augustus have talked about this unprecedented flow of money, which presents such incredible opportunity, but with it, a corresponding responsibility and accountability to a number of people, to ED in the funding sources, to taxpayers, to families, and most importantly, the students. So, this is our opportunity to build back better than before. And we have the dollars to do that now. And I love when Marie says let's plan, we want to develop a plan. We don't want to say, "how can I spend the money," but how can I be strategic in planning the most powerful plan and using the funds in an aligned way to change outcomes for students, accelerate learning, and support mental health, wellbeing, social-emotional learning of our students and children. So, with that, our expectation again is what are the systems, structures, practices that we can support you with as you think about the requirement that you will report and be accountable for the use of the funds in your way.

So, please do take an opportunity to complete that. And, of course, the survey is not the only time you can give us feedback. You can communicate with your REL team or your CC team at any point as needs emerge in your ARP ESSA planning process. And I'll close with that before we turn it over to the office hours, for those who are choosing to stay for that opportunity, we know that about, not all, but most states have submitted their ARP ESSA plans. Our goal is to, we already have begun a review to look at the themes that are emerging in your overall priorities, as well as your priorities for underserved students. And again, like the survey, we will use that as an opportunity to see which themes emerge and how the CC/RELs can continue to support your needs once you get feedback and approved plans from the US Department of Education. So, with that have a wonderful rest of your morning for the west coast and rest of your afternoon. Thank you again for being here. And I will say thank you and good day.